

**BDAC Ecosystem Roundtable Meeting
21 January 1997**

Attendee List

Roundtable Members

John Beuttler
Nat Bingham
Gary Bobker
Bill Gaines
Greg Gartrell
Randy Kanouse

Cynthia Koehler
Jackie McCort
Hari Modi
Jason Peltier
Tim Quinn
Allen Short

David Yargas
Tom Zuckerman

CALFED Liaisons

Marc Luesebrink

Laura King

Patrick Wright

Other Participants

Serge Birk
Doug Brewer
Rik Chapman
Cindy Darling
Greg Elliott
Anthony Farrington
Amy Fowler
Kathy Freas
Dan Fults
Kate Hansel
Tom Hickman
Steve Hirsch

Jeff Jaraczski
Marti Kie
Steve Kellogg
Eugenia Laychak
Roger Masuda
Patricia Mosley
Dan Nelson
Fernando Paludi
Jeff Phipps
Michelle Pla
Jeremy Pratt
Robin Reynolds

Gordon Sanford
Mary Selkirk
Karen Schwinn
Greg Sutter
Nancy Schaefer
Fred Schantz
Mary Ann Tarmerdam
Audrey Tennis
Kelly Tennis
Mike Welsh
Scott Wilcox
Susan Williams

Draft Meeting Summary

Action Items and Decisions

1. The implementation strategy will be redrafted. Any comments on the strategy from Roundtable members should be provided to Cindy Darling by January 29, 1997.

2. CALFED staff will fax out a tentative agenda for the technical team meetings and related information to solicit Roundtable input on Thursday of this week.
3. A panel will be invited to address various issues of concern to the Roundtable, including venture capital issues, at a future meeting. Any Roundtable members who would like to assist, should contact Tom Zuckerman.
4. There will be informational presentation on the ERPP, and the role of the Roundtable and ERWG prior to next month's meeting. The role and activities of the CVPIA may be addressed at that time as well.
5. An additional meeting has been scheduled for February 5 at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the needs assessment.

Items for Future Meetings

- A report from the needs assessment subgroup.
- A draft final implementation strategy document.
- Information on the funding allocation process.
- An update on technical team agendas, goals, and objectives.
- Roles of the CALFED Management Team.
- An update on the CVPIA Restoration Roundtable.
- A report on coordination with other funding sources.

Future meetings of Roundtable are as follows:

Wednesday, February 5, 10:00 a.m. (needs assessment meeting)

Thursday, February 20, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Friday, March 14, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Friday, April 11, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Friday, May 9, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Friday, June 13, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Draft Meeting Notes

The meeting began at 9:45 a.m. with agenda changes suggested by Cindy Darling and Gary Bobker. The agenda changes included a postponement of the lunchtime speaker about venture capital issues to a future meeting, addition of a discussion of the 5-year workplan, and a suggestion that there be a regular CVPIA Roundtable update at each Ecosystem Roundtable meeting. Introductions by all attendees followed the agenda changes.

Implementation Strategy

Cindy Darling proceeded to discuss the implementation strategy document that was provided as part of the Roundtable meeting package (draft dated 9 January 1997). Cindy reviewed each of the sections of the document and noted changes or revisions based on comments at the last

Roundtable meeting. Revisions included clarification of the rationale section, and additional rationale regarding the emphasis on aquatic species and habitat species that were of high risk.

The species that were included in the implementation strategy document were the same as listed during the last Roundtable meeting, with the addition of striped bass.

Habitat types were included which have experienced the greatest declines and which provide the broadest ecosystem benefits or benefits to priority species. These habitat types were adapted from the overall Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan (ERPP) goals, which was used along with input from the Environmental Water Caucus (EWC) to refine the final list. Habitat types have been distributed to technical reviewers, and feedback is still being received. Among the habitat types considered the highest priority, the agricultural wetlands and perennial grasslands type is considered "borderline" for inclusion, but it is important because of its value in the North Delta and the rapid loss of this type of habitat (particularly due to vineyard planting).

The implementation strategy section on physical and ecosystem processes was emphasized as an important consideration for all restoration projects, whether they are prioritized on a species, habitat type, or geographical basis. The recent realignment of Butte Creek during the flood was cited as an example of the importance of physical processes, since the Parrott-Phelan diversion dam and fish screen was left high and dry after floods reestablished the Butte Creek channel in a different location.

The geographic distribution of priorities was expected to "fall out" of the other implementation factors, based on different species, habitat types, physical processes, etc. So, no specific geographic priorities have been included.

The criteria list for addressing technical and policy objectives was briefly reviewed, and it was noted that this list can be revised and supplemented as the process progresses. It is not a final criteria list for selection of restoration actions.

Discussion ensued regarding the contents of this draft of the implementation strategy. Comments included the following:

- The need was expressed for a greater emphasis on terrestrial species and habitat types. There were no wildlife species, or their surrogates, included as priority species.
- The need for more seasonal wetlands was expressed, along with a reduction in the aquatic priority for projects.
- An opinion was expressed that the focus for potential projects should be wide at this point in the process, and that specific projects can have a narrower focus at a later date.
- A concern was expressed regarding a level of fragmentation that will occur by prioritizing based on habitats and the fact that there is a need for a more comprehensive restoration approach.
- The view was expressed that the Roundtable should focus on short-term distinct projects with

aspects that are consistent with a more comprehensive restoration plan, but the current projects cannot be all inclusive of habitat types and other factors needed for restoration.

- It was suggested that geography be the driving factor for prioritizing and implementing projects, in order to avoid conflicts over particular species and habitat types.
- Questions were raised regarding the relationship of this Roundtable document to the Ecosystem Restoration Workgroup (ERWG), along with specific questions about what this implementation strategy document will be used for.

In response to some of these concerns, Mary Selkirk noted that the relationship of the Roundtable to the ERWG is still being refined. Gary Bobker noted that the ERWG is looking at all components of a comprehensive restoration strategy, and considering how much restoration to do (or how far to go), versus the Roundtable looking at short-term projects and more limited funding. Cindy Darling elaborated on these comments and noted that the role of the Roundtable is to advance some focused high priority projects over the short-term. It was noted that Dick Daniel, Frank Wernette, and Terry Mills have reviewed and approved this implementation strategy prior to the Roundtable meeting.

Continued comments on the implementation strategy included the following:

- The second paragraph of the introduction should have a reference to CVPIA activities. The rationale should discuss scientific certainty and uncertainty regarding restoration projects. There was concern that the habitat types are too focused on the delta and required more upland emphasis.
- A question was raised regarding the life of this implementation plan. Cindy Darling replied that it would be used for up to 5 years, with revisions throughout that time period.
- It was noted that the set of programmatic targets that the ERWG is developing in the ERPP needs to be known in order for the Roundtable to be clear on what subset the ERPP targets it is supposed to deal with. Gary Bobker noted that the overlap in membership between the ERWG and Roundtable helps with this process to some degree, but perhaps a more formal link is necessary.
- It was noted that the Roundtable role is to plan across various funding and regulatory lines. Accordingly, the implementation strategy is to reflect the concept of the virtual pool and integration of other plans into a draft of this strategy. There was concern that the document currently focuses too exclusively on CALFED projects. It was noted, however, that this implementation strategy is simply one part or chapter of a multi-chapter report and as such it does not yet address all possible programs that the Roundtable may provide recommendations for.
- It was commented that the implementation strategy needs to pool all the various funding sources together, and that it might be better titled an Interim Implementation Strategy for the Short Term. Opportunities regarding setback levees or other opportune measures due to the recent flooding should be highlighted. It was also noted that the concept of riparian zones or conservation zones may be a more pertinent focus than discrete habitat types.
- It was noted that perhaps the mission information for the Roundtable from the previous

meeting packet could be merged into this implementation document to address some of the above comments.

- There is a need to coordinate Roundtable activities with the CVPIA *process*, and not just with results of the CVPIA program.
- There needs to be an acknowledgment and focus on hydrological regimes in the various habitat types as part of the implementation strategy.
- It was expressed that there should be more integration of physical processes in the writeup and section 5 of the strategy.
- It was expressed that flood control issues can potentially be addressed in some of the habitat restoration projects. It was expressed that, conversely, necessary flood control items and solutions may have some benefits for habitat restoration. In either case, the immediate need for levee repairs provides an opportunity to implement some restoration projects.
- It was noted that there may be some inconsistency in the wording between implementation strategy criteria No. 6 (long-term benefits) and No. 9 (reducing limiting factors for listed species). This should be clarified in a redraft of the document.
- It was noted that splittail need to be added to Table 2 for the San Joaquin system, particularly in high water years.
- There needs to be more flexibility within the implementation strategy to address fish screening issues, and the focus on habitat types may not address this issue. There was some discussion about whether fish screening would actually be subsumed under items for individual species.
- It was expressed that there may be a need to monitor other species in the food web, besides just the key species of interest. For example, invertebrate species like *Neomysis* and *Crangon*. The question was raised regarding the level of possible funding for non-project specific monitoring.

Additional discussion about the current Roundtable process included the request for an informational briefing on the past process to this point, where has the group come from (Category III activities, etc.), what has been accomplished, what has worked or not worked in the past, and other issues. Some Category III documents can be used as background information on this past process. All this information would help better establish what the future activity for the Roundtable should be.

Other comments included questions regarding the level of monitoring activity that may be funded. The amount of funding for non-project specific monitoring needs to be addressed. Another item of interest is the addition of criteria for projects that can bring cost-share funds in to the process. A couple of comments on the geographical distribution of priorities questioned why steelhead are not included on the smaller tributaries for restoration projects, and why there is nothing cited for the Pacific Ocean as a factor in the restoration process. The opinion was expressed that the Roundtable implementation strategy needs to emphasize efforts that are currently underway, versus an emphasis on new studies or projects that need to be started from scratch. It was noted that the next draft implementation strategy would benefit from more clarity regarding what the document is to be used for. The Roundtable was reminded that any technical review comments on the implementation strategy should be provided to Cindy Darling shortly.

Following conclusion of the discussion of the implementation strategy, Cindy Darling discussed the five-year work plan and distributed a one page handout on the restoration coordination program update. The five-year work plan will ideally be completed in March.

Technical Teams

The status of the technical team meetings was reviewed. A question was raised regarding the Mokelumne and Cosumnes Rivers and their lack of a technical team. Restoration actions on these east side tributaries may be delayed to future years, since they are not as yet recommended as high priority areas relative to Sacramento River tributaries, San Joaquin River tributaries, and the Delta. This is partly due to the relatively limited anadromous fish resources and habitat in this area compared to other parts of the system.

The makeup of the technical teams and the possible overlap with previous technical teams was discussed. Cindy Darling indicated that existing groups (such as SJRMP) are being utilized to the degree possible. More input to the composition and agenda for the technical teams is desired for the Roundtable. There was also concern that the Roundtable should have more control of the technical team workshop agenda. Kate Hansel noted that in order to have agenda input to the Sacramento program technical team meetings, any comments are needed as soon as possible.

Needs Assessment

David Yargas provided a brief summary of the status of the needs assessment. An outline from the needs assessment subgroup's previous work was distributed. Any comments regarding this document should be submitted to Cindy Darling and David Yargas by Friday, January 24. A Roundtable subgroup meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 5 at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the agenda for technical team meetings and any comments on the needs assessment.

David also distributed a draft resolution from the EWC regarding National Fish and Wildlife Foundation assistance for administering Category III stakeholder funds and possibly other restoration funds.

Interaction With Other Groups and Agencies

There will be a meeting of the CALFED management team at the end of the month. They will be addressing the role of the Ecosystem Roundtable, cost sharing under Proposition 204, and other items. It was noted there is a State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) workshop being convened for January 30 regarding the portion of the Proposition 204 funds for watershed management. A handout on this SWRCB agenda for the meeting was distributed. Concern was expressed regarding coordination of SWRCB activities under Proposition 204 with other CALFED agencies.

There has been a flood assessment team appointed by Governor Wilson to deal with the current flood issues. It was suggested the representative from the Roundtable attend the flood assessment team meetings to look for possible integration of Roundtable restoration projects with necessary flood damage control or repair activities. Generally, it was noted there is a need for knowledge of what other programs such as the Delta Levees program are doing and how the Roundtable may integrate its restoration projects with other ongoing work.

Mary Selkirk commented on the need for a mechanism to improve communication between the ERWG and the Roundtable. She suggested meeting 2 hours early (11 a.m.), over lunch, at the next Roundtable meeting in order to exchange information regarding ERWG/Roundtable coordination.

Appropriations Issues

Tim Quinn provided a brief report on appropriations issues being addressed in Washington D.C. Various stakeholders have formed a group of 23 signatories (18 Water Agencies and 5 Environmental Groups) that are interested in ecosystem restoration and are involved independent of CALFED in lobbying efforts in Washington D.C. The upcoming Clinton administration budget is expected to be favorable for restoration activities, but specifics are not yet known. It is possible that a central account will be established within the Department of Interior for restoration funds.

CVPIA Roundtable

Jeff Phipps provided a brief update on activities of the CVPIA Roundtable. There is a CVPIA Roundtable meeting Friday, January 24 at Solano Irrigation District. Among items on the agenda is a discussion of more extensive stakeholder involvement in the CVPIA Roundtable, and looking at updates to the current cost sharing with the state.

Other Items

There was discussion about the possible need for more frequent meetings, the role of subgroups, constraints of legal noticing etc. It was recommended that some sort of master calendar for CALFED be published to help organize the schedules of various Roundtable members.

With regard to the workplan it was commented that there is a need for clarification of roles of various CALFED entities and the interface of CALFED with other agencies and stakeholders.

A final item included additional discussion regarding involvement of Roundtable members at technical team meetings. There was a desire expressed for Roundtable member attendance at some of the meetings as observers. The influence of Roundtable members and the effect on technical team productivity was discussed, and further discussion was postponed until the February 5 meeting.